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| **Province** | **Législature/Legislature** | **Session** | **Type de discours/Type of speech** | **Date du discours/Date** | **Locuteur/Speaker** | **Fonction du locuteur/Function** | **Parti politique/Political party** |
| Colombie-Britannique / British-Columbia | 40 | 5 | Discours du Trône/Speech from the Throne | 09-02-2016 | Judith Guichon | Lieutenant-gouverneur/ Lieutenant-governor | Parti saskatchewanais / Saskatchewan Party |

Members of the Legislative Assembly, and fellow British Columbians.

It is a pleasure and privilege to serve the people of British Columbia – and to welcome you back to the people’s house.

I would like to acknowledge the wisdom, culture, and traditions of the Songhees and Esquimalt First Nations on whose traditional lands we are gathered today.

Some of the newest British Columbians are here with us today in the legislature. I speak for everyone in this house, when I say: you are welcome here.

So many cultures are represented in British Columbia, but today quite auspiciously is the second day of the Lunar New Year. To those celebrating, we wish you a joyous and prosperous new year.

**Tributes**

Since the chamber was last addressed from the throne, we should take a moment to reflect on some of the extraordinary British Columbians we have mourned.

They include those who represented British Columbia at our finest, like Ted Harrison, Lorne Davies, Victor Spencer, Martha Farrell, Stuart Hodgson, and Dal Richards.

Media figures Fred Latremouille, Ben Meisner, and Art Finley, and community leaders like Allen Hustwick, Thomas Baker, and Chief Clarence Jules.

In 2015, we mourned a former member of parliament, Lyle Kristiansen, and five former members of this legislature, Peter Dueck, Ivan Messmer, Anita Hagen, Norman Levi and John Slater.

We owe a special debt to the brave search and rescue professionals and volunteers who rallied to the scene of tragedy, from the wildfires across our province, to Tofino and McBride. To keep us safe, they put themselves in harm’s way – and sometimes pay the ultimate price. We all mourn John Phare, the first-ever recipient of the Medal of Good Citizenship.

Finally, in 2015 we lost Bill Bennett, the 27th Premier of British Columbia.

For nearly 10 years, Bill Bennett served our province with distinction. We stand on the legacy he built every day, from the sites and facilities of Expo 86, to the Coquihalla Highway, and the expansion of our mining and clean hydro industries. Bill Bennett will be remembered for his achievements but also for the strength of his character, his principles, and an unflinching sense of duty to his fellow citizens.

**B.C.’s Distinctiveness In Today’s World**

Steadfast, resilient, and the courage to get to yes. That’s the spirit of who we are as British Columbians.

Nothing is a greater demonstration of that spirit than the Great Bear Rainforest Agreement. One of the greatest acts of conservation in our country. One that establishes the certainty required for economic development. An agreement that enshrines human well-being and an opportunity for First Nations to benefit.

To the leaders from our Coastal First Nations and the Nanwakolas, the public service, our forestry industry, and the environmental organizations whose hard work and determination helped achieve this agreement, you have demonstrated how British Columbians can come together around our shared values and show the world how we do business: with respect for where we live and for each other.

It is part of the story of what makes B.C. unique.

British Columbia’s economy leads Canada.

We have the opportunity to eliminate the operating debt in just four years, paving the path towards a debt-free B.C. In 2015, we led Canada by creating more than 50,000 new jobs.

This happened because of hard work and determination, a commitment to controlling government spending, balanced budgets, and a focus on building a strong, diverse, and growing economy that creates jobs and prosperity.

Your government remains focused on the long-term goals set out in the BC Jobs Plan. Currently, 14 of the 19 targets have been met – and progress continues to be made on the remaining five targets.

But these accomplishments – and the prosperity that British Columbians are working so hard to achieve – are at risk.

The global economy is fragile. Oil and gas and commodity prices have fallen drastically. And our country faces immense economic challenges.

Consider our neighbours in Alberta – a province of similar size, and also blessed with natural resources.

Over the decades, Alberta lost its focus. They expected their resource boom never to end, failed to diversify their economy and lost control of government spending.

So today, with the price of oil at historic lows, global markets shutting down, and the Canadian dollar falling, it has never been more important to stay vigilant.

To protect British Columbia from global trends – we must continue to work hard with determination, and resist the temptation to spend our way into trouble.

**Strong Diverse Economy**

Our island of prosperity is a collective accomplishment that we can all take pride in. Because we built it together, brick by brick.

For example, about 80 per cent of B.C.’s unionized public sector employees are covered by agreements negotiated under the Economic Stability Mandate.

This happened because 250,000 hardworking men and women said yes, and gave themselves a stake in growing the economy.

This is crucial. To grow and diversify our economy, we must have the courage to say yes.

Yes to recognizing that economic development and environmental protection go hand in hand.

Yes to planning for future growth and creating a climate where job-creating businesses can thrive.

Because a growing economy is not an accomplishment for its own sake.

It’s the only way to sustain, much less expand, critical services for a growing and ageing population.

It’s the only way to make investments in infrastructure, schools, and hospitals.

It’s the only way to create real opportunities for families.

Your government’s strategy to increase international trade continues to pay real dividends.

Total exports from B.C. are worth over $35 billion per year – an increase of 41 per cent since 2009. In that same time, exports to China have increased 116 per cent. Exports to India have increased 660 per cent.

A major part of that success has been increasing the number of trade and investment representatives abroad. That number will increase again in 2016 with a new trade office in the Philippines.

Of the 8 key sectors of the BC Jobs Plan, the fastest-growing is tech. It’s already employing more than 86,000 British Columbians, at wages 60 per cent higher than the industrial average.

Your government’s new BC Tech Strategy will attract and reward investment, create jobs, and provide more training.

One of the products B.C. is known around the world for is agriculture.

B.C.’s precious coasts have long been known for their abundant and sustainable seafood – and they represent our most significant opportunity to address world hunger.

Last year, at $3 billion, was the highest ever sales of B.C. food and beverage products. This year, your government will continue its work to increase provincial revenues in agrifoods and seafoods to $15 billion a year by 2020.

Climate change and increasing demands on water are challenging global agricultural production, in particular in the US and Mexico where much of our fresh produce is grown. Combined with the current low Canadian dollar, this creates rising food prices, which are putting a strain on B.C. families.

Part of the solution to that challenge is reflected in the success B.C. agriculture is experiencing.

Already, your government has grown the size of Agricultural Land Reserve and modernized the operations of the Agricultural Land Commission.

This year, your government will build on those successes by increasing its financial support for the Commission and moving forward with a tax credit for farmers that donate food to non-profits. And in November, the first ever provincial agrifoods conference will be held in Kelowna, focusing on food supply security for B.C.

British Columbians recognize the value of our agricultural sector in ensuring our food supply security, and this is supported through the Buy Local program.

Your government will expand on these efforts by piloting work with industry, local governments, and community organizations to encourage and support British Columbians to Buy Local, Grow Local. This work will get more British Columbians engaged in growing food at home and in their communities. It will provide another source of fresh fruits and vegetables, and further strengthen the connections between British Columbians, our communities, and our agricultural sector.

Red tape restricts growth, impedes flexibility, and makes life more complicated for families. That is why your government extended its commitment to a net zero increase in regulatory requirements to 2019.

Since 2001, there has been a 43 per cent total reduction in requirements – 155,000 needless rules removed, with more than 1,700 in 2015 alone.

More than 5,900 British Columbians have submitted their ideas on reducing red tape. Over the coming months, many of those will become reality. Right now, more than 200 red tape reduction projects are underway or completed.

A major component of your government’s plan for a growing and diverse economy is the opportunity presented by LNG.

There are 20 active projects at various stages of development. Over 30 investment partners are involved, and between them, they have invested some $20 billion.

There is no question that unforeseen global conditions are posing new challenges. Low global prices will have an impact on your government’s initial timelines.

But government has done everything it set out to do to attract investment for the cleanest LNG in the world. As companies consider their best opportunities to reach final investment decisions, your government will continue to work to bring home the opportunity of LNG to B.C.

Success is not for quitters. Success demands steadfast attention, and resiliency in the face of global challenges.

It is not a choice between keeping B.C.’s natural gas industry stable or deciding to grow it. We must begin to export, or the 13,000 people who depend on this industry today will be out of work.

As the world’s cleanest-burning fossil fuel, demand for LNG will increase, and with it, the price.

And your government will ensure there is equity for future generations of British Columbians by establishing a Prosperity Fund, to leave an endowment for future generations, to pay down and eliminate the debt, and to invest in the services and infrastructure that British Columbians rely on to get ahead.

**Climate**

As part of B.C.’s innovative clean energy and tech sector, LNG has a vital contribution to make in the world.

There is a lesson to draw from the UN climate conference in Paris: the world is changing. Developing and growing economies in countries like China and India are looking for cleaner energy to power their future.

B.C. has the potential to be a clean energy superpower, helping others reduce emissions – whether by replacing coal-fired plants with LNG overseas, or by supplying hydroelectric power to Alberta.

Being a vital supplier of the things our neighbours and trading partners need is exactly how we are succeeding today. It is equally the plan for tomorrow.

It means more jobs in B.C., and it means reducing global emissions.

B.C. was one of the first jurisdictions in North America to not only set a price on carbon, but to use that revenue to cut your taxes at home.

This is a truly revenue-neutral tax – not an opportunistic reach into taxpayers’ wallets.

Your government will continue consulting with you before releasing a final Climate Leadership Plan later this year.

**First Nations**

For over a hundred years, British Columbians have successfully created strong, vibrant industries, particularly in the resource sector.

But we have too often failed to ensure First Nations received their share of the benefits of a modern economy.

We are now moving in the right direction.

In just seven years the Tsawwassen First Nation has planned residential, commercial, and industrial projects with the potential to inject over $1 billion in investment, and create thousands of new jobs.

Since 2011, your government has invested in clean energy projects in 116 Aboriginal communities, like the geothermal heating and cooling system at Senkulmen Business Park on Osoyoos Indian Band land.

This year, your government will convene the third annual gathering of Cabinet with First Nations leaders from every corner of the province.

Your government will work with its partners in Ottawa on the Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and also work with local communities and First Nations to move forward with its five point action plan for safe transportation options along Highway 16.

**Housing**

All British Columbians deserve to share in the benefits of a growing economy.

This month, your government will take steps to ease the pressures of cost of living increases.

Your government will look into any allegations of improper behaviour in the housing market, and where appropriate, government will take action.

Your government will also work to give British Columbians a better opportunity to enter the housing market, and encourage more housing supply.

There is no single solution, and no one level of government can do this on its own.

Your government will work with municipalities to reduce the hidden costs in home purchases, and to make those hidden costs clear and transparent to the homebuyer.

Your government will work carefully to protect the savings and equity that existing homeowners have painstakingly placed in their homes.

**Thriving Communities**

For communities to truly thrive, we must care for those among us who need it.

British Columbia’s dedicated social workers work hard in the most difficult circumstances, touching the lives of thousands of people.

In the past year, 274 children were placed for adoption, more than 28,000 clients seen by Child and Youth Mental Health Services, and more than 111,000 licensed child care spaces funded.

The Ministry of Children and Family Development has begun the work of responding to the Plecas Report.

That work must begin with ending the culture of blame that exists for those public servants with the most difficult role.

As Mr. Plecas said, “if we could walk a mile in the front line social worker’s shoes, to drive five hours to a remote community only to be denied access…or attend at a home of a neighbour and have to remove their child because of violent threats – all the while fearing for their own personal safety – we might begin to understand the job.”

Besides cultural changes, your government is committed to maintaining the stability Mr. Plecas deemed crucial, and hiring even more social workers than recommended.

In the coming weeks, your government will announce more measures to further support both at-risk children, and our social workers.

**Safe Streets**

In the Lower Mainland, there are too many sad stories – too many parents mourning children who didn’t come home.

Your government is taking action. The anti-gang unit has significant resources on the ground, working with Surrey and Delta police, with integrated teams and new police officers on the ground.

This is progress, but we need to do more. Your government will continue to work with its federal counterparts to secure more RCMP resources and officers.

**Public Servants**

To ensure tomorrow’s leaders are ready for tomorrow’s economy and opportunities, your government has worked with teachers to develop a new curriculum, new supports, and the training teachers need to bring it to life.

That is in addition to investments to address class composition, hire more teachers, and continue the work of seismically upgrading B.C. schools.

With 80 per cent of all unionized employees in B.C. under long-term labour agreements, including the longest period of labour peace ever achieved with B.C.’s teachers, British Columbians can count on uninterrupted service.

In the coming months, your government will work with the men and women on the front lines of health care, and reach a negotiated settlement with B.C.’s hardworking nurses.

The service that most defines us as Canadians is health care. And despite a growing, ageing population – B.C. boasts some of the best outcomes in the world.

In 2016, your government will continue to invest in patient care and shifting needs, and continue its four-year plan to add 65,000 more MRI scans per year in B.C.

Not all afflictions are visible. This year, the cabinet working group on mental health will take action to improve access and supports for British Columbians struggling with mental illness.

In the coming weeks, your government will also introduce legislation to modernize community care and assisted living.

**New British Columbians**

As we continue to grow and diversify the economy, and as we continue to give British Columbians the skills they need through the Skills for Jobs Blueprint, they will be first in line for the jobs that are already being created.

But we should also remember immigration built this province. With the exception of our First Nations, every one of us is descended from immigrants.

Today, British Columbia and Canada are proof positive that people from different cultures and traditions can live in peace and build vibrant, thriving communities.

That is why your government is working with Ottawa and individual sponsors not just to resettle more refugees from Syria – but to welcome them.

**Standing Up For B.C.**

My fellow British Columbians, these are uncertain times for the global economy.

Your government will continue to stand up for B.C., for British Columbians, and for the communities and industries that not only built this province, but sustain our prosperity.

Forestry is a crucial industry for British Columbia, and the thousands of men and women who depend on it.

And while the industry continues to thrive, there are serious disagreements with our largest trading partner: the expired softwood lumber agreement, and the unfair US Department of Commerce ruling on Catalyst.

Both present a real risk to jobs.

Your government will work with its federal counterparts to renew the softwood agreement, and press for a full investigation of Catalyst to confirm they have received no government subsidies.

The men and women who depend on B.C.’s mining sector are under threat from low prices for copper and coal – but they are also under threat from internal critics looking for an opportunity to see the industry closed.

To those among us who look down on mining, I would say this: every consumer electronics product you own, every transmission line that connects the world to clean solar or hydro power – each is only possible with materials mined in British Columbia.

Your government has introduced several measures to help the men, women, and entire communities who depend on B.C.’s mining sector.

Your government will also keep working towards securing the Trans Pacific Partnership agreement, which will create enormous new opportunities for British Columbia, and work with all members of this legislature to ensure we speak with one voice.

Getting to yes on economic development does not mean cutting corners, or bowing to external pressure.

In the province that invented the concept of social license, it means working with communities to ensure their concerns are addressed – and with proponents to help address them.

That is why your government will continue to stand up for B.C. with the Five Conditions for heavy oil pipelines – to ensure that any proposal achieves regulatory approvals, to ensure we have world-leading spill response on our coast and on our land, to make sure First Nations are participants, and to make sure B.C. receives our fair share.

**Infrastructure**

Controlling spending does not mean failing to invest in the future. There is currently more than $7 billion dollars’ worth of ongoing infrastructure projects. This economic stimulus is happening right now – without pushing B.C. into deficit.

In addition to creating thousands of jobs, projects like the South Fraser Perimeter Road, Evergreen Line, and George Massey Tunnel Replacement will reduce time spent in traffic burning fuel, get our goods to market, and people home to their families faster.

Not only are these projects an investment in our growing province – they are creating 150,000 jobs over the next 10 years.

That is in addition to the significant investments underway at BC Hydro – $2.4 billion dollars every year for the next 10 years. That includes Site C, which will provide clean energy for our growing economy – ensuring future demands can be met without increasing emissions.

**Conclusion**

My fellow British Columbians, as we work to protect and strengthen our island of prosperity, we owe it to our children to remember we are the envy of the world because of choices made by the men and women who left the province in our care.

Steadfast. Resilient. And the courage to get to yes.

We have the same responsibility.

To choose to stand up for B.C.

To choose hard work and determination.

To choose to keep our focus in the face of growing global uncertainty.

To choose to create opportunity.

To choose to give ourselves the ability to intervene in times of crisis.

British Columbia is entering Canada’s 150th birthday as leaders in Confederation.

Let us continue to make the right choices today for a stronger, more secure tomorrow.

Thank you.